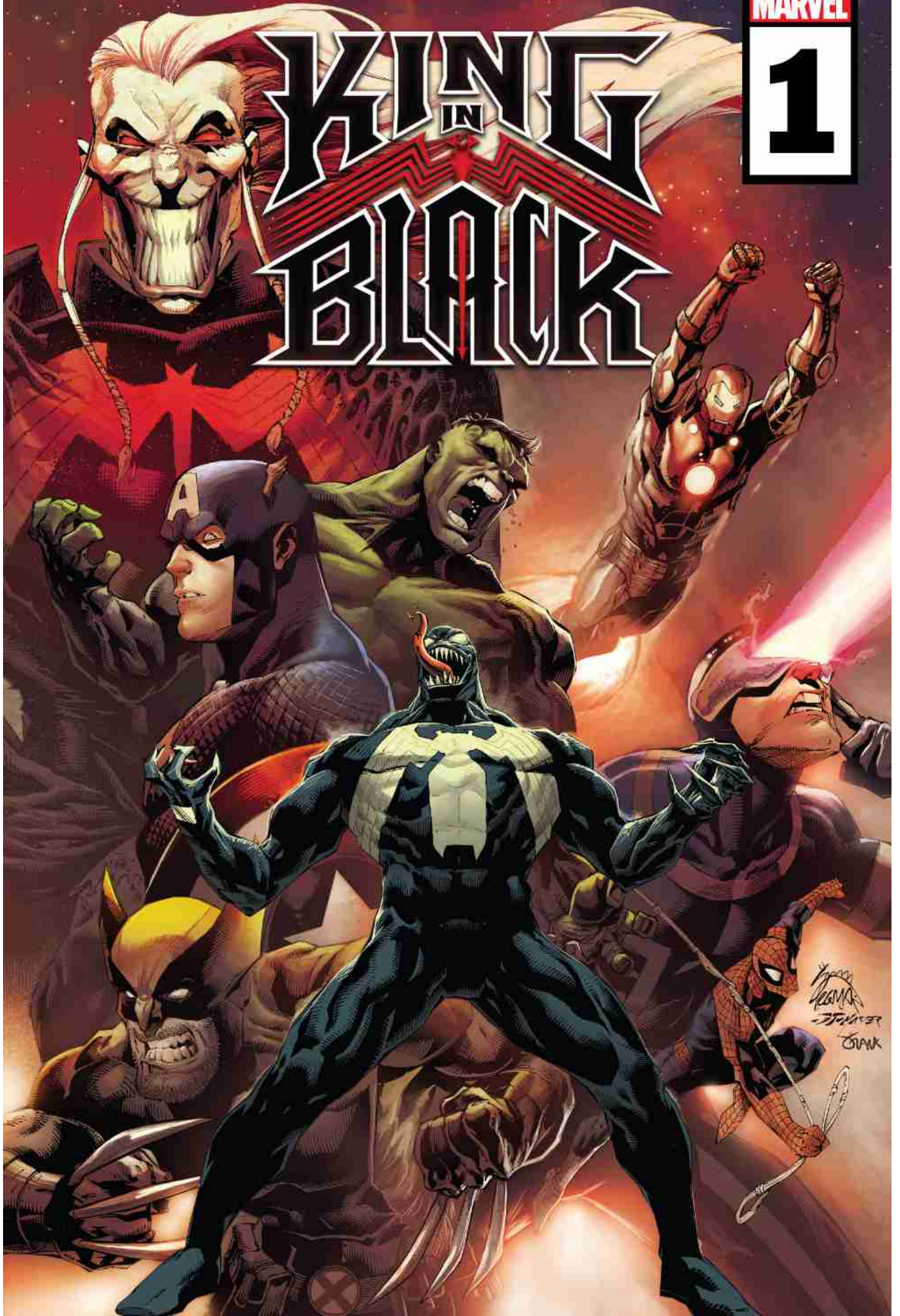


CATES • STEGMAN • MAYER • MARTIN

MARVEL

1

KING BLACK



HE'S
HERE.

WE CAN FEEL HIM,
SCREAMING THROUGH
THE BLACK, RACING
TOWARD THE WHOLE
OF CREATION...

HIS HANDS
WRAPPING AROUND
THE WORLD'S
THROAT.

CAP?
IT'S ME...

THIS
IS IT.

NO
MORE
RUNNING.

NO
MORE
HIDING.

IT'S
TIME.

KNOLL. THE
LORD OF THE
ABYSS...

...THE GOD OF
THE SYMBIOTES...

has

...HAS
ARRIVED.



THE CALL
GOES OUT.

ALL HANDS
ON DECK.

IF THE PLAN
HOLDS, THE
EVACUATIONS
WILL START ANY
SECOND NOW.

MY OTHER CAN ALREADY
FEEL THE PANIC RISING
IN THE AIR.

I SENSE IT TRYING
TO CALM MY
NERVES AS WELL...

BUT IT'S NOT KNELL
THAT'S MAKING MY
HEART SKIP...

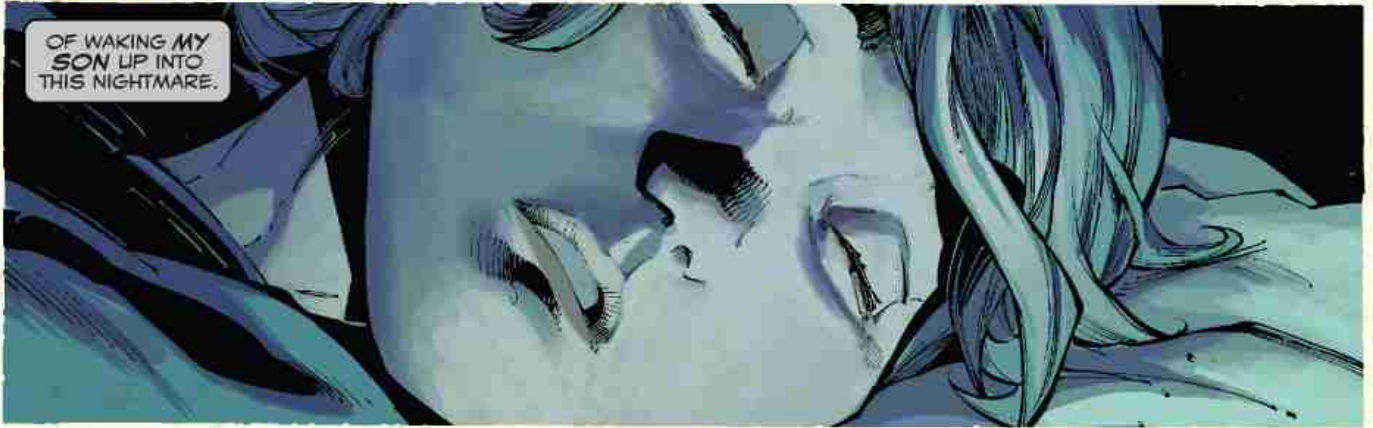
NO, THAT
FEAR WILL
COME LATER...

RIGHT
NOW, I'M
SCARED...

...OF
THIS.



OF WAKING MY
SON UP INTO
THIS NIGHTMARE.



DYLAN'S BEEN
THROUGH SO
MUCH.



HE DESERVES BETTER
THAN THIS. DESERVES
TO BE INNOCENT. TO
BE A CHILD.

I WISH ON EVERY
DISAPPEARING STAR IN
THE SKY THAT I COULD
JUST LET HIM SLEEP.

THAT MY SON NEVER
HAS TO FACE THE
HORRORS OF THIS
WORLD I HAVE
BROUGHT HIM INTO.





THAT HE NEVER
HAS TO INHERIT
MY DARKNESS.



DYLAN?



WH... HEY...
WHAT'S--



I'M
SORRY, BUDDY.
BUT--



I KNOW.
I CAN FEEL IT
TOO.

HE'S
HERE, ISN'T
HE?



...
YES,
NOW, LISTEN TO
ME. WE NEED
TO--

--MOVE! COME ON, PEOPLE, IT'S GO TIME. GROUND TEAMS AND EVACUATION SHIPS ARE MOBILIZING IN DROP SITES AS WE SPEAK, BUT WE ARE ON DECK FIRST.

LET'S GET MEAN, SHALL WE?

AVENGERS MOUNTAIN.
NOW.

TONY? WHERE ARE WE?

HARD TO SAY, CAP. FROM THE INTEL THAT BROCK GAVE US, WE KNOW THAT KNULL AND HIS SYMBIOTE HORDE DON'T LEAVE HEAT SIGNATURES.

SO WE DON'T HAVE AN EXACT LOCK JUST YET, BUT THEY'LL TRIP OVER OUR LAND MINES EITHER WAY.

IS THAT WHAT WE'RE CALLING THEM?

SILVER LININGS, CAP.



"HAVING A LEFTOVER ARMADA OF DERELICT KREE AND SKRULL WARSHIPS FLOATING AROUND IN THE UPPER ATMOSPHERE MIGHT JUST GIVE US THE EDGE WE NEED."

YOU JUST LIKE TURNING THINGS INTO BOMBS.

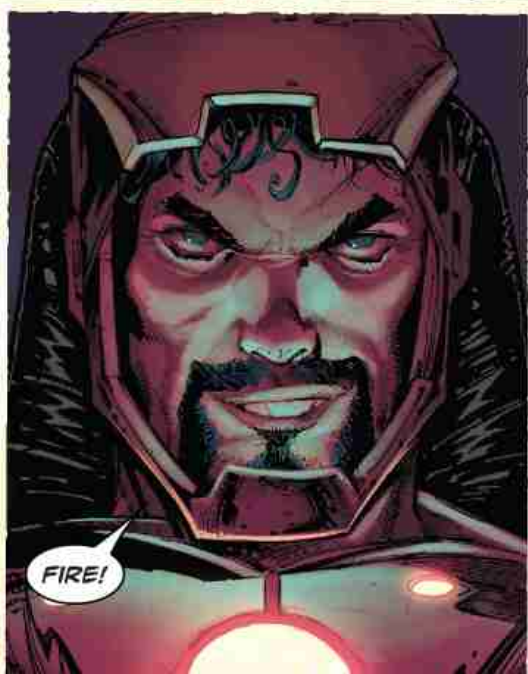
OLD HABITS. HEY, SPEAKING OF BOMBS, ANY WORD ON THE BIG MAN YET?

STILL WAITING. I'D SAY A PRAYER IF I WERE--

HEADS UP!

GOOD NEWS AND BAD NEWS, BOYS.

LOOKS LIKE WE FOUND THEM...







PETER GAVE US ACCESS TO THIS SAFE ROOM AFTER WE CAME CLEAN TO THE AVENGERS ABOUT KNULL.

SAID IT WAS BUILT FOR HIM BY SOMEONE NAMED EZEKIEL. SUPPOSEDLY IT CAN SURVIVE A NUCLEAR HOLOCAUST.



I JUST PRAY IT CAN WITHSTAND WHAT'S COMING NOW...

DAD, PLEASE DON'T DO THIS. DON'T LEAVE ME IN HERE!

WE'VE BEEN OVER THIS. IT'S NOT UP FOR DISCUSSION. I HAVE TO--

I CAN HELP! YOU KNOW WHAT I CAN DO, DAD. I HAVE POWERS LIKE HIM!

MAYBE I CAN...I DON'T KNOW, MAYBE I CAN TAKE CONTROL OF THE HIVE, OR-- OR--



DYLAN, THAT'S ENOUGH!

I MADE YOU A PROMISE. I TOLD YOU I WOULD PROTECT YOU NO MATTER WHAT, SON. AND I...



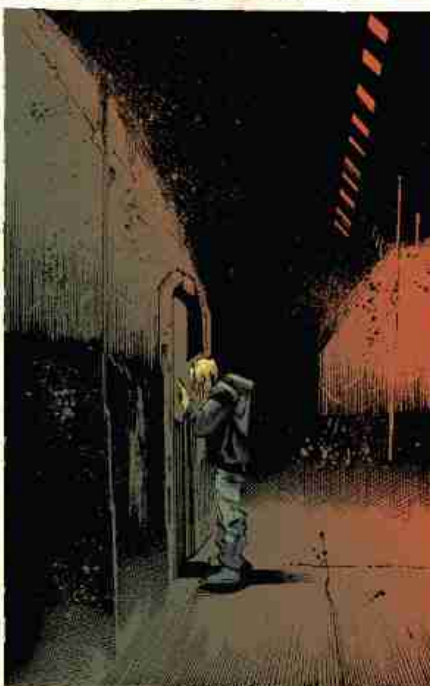
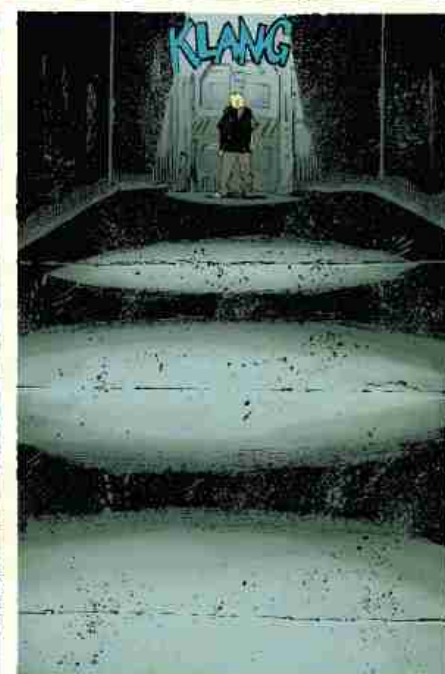
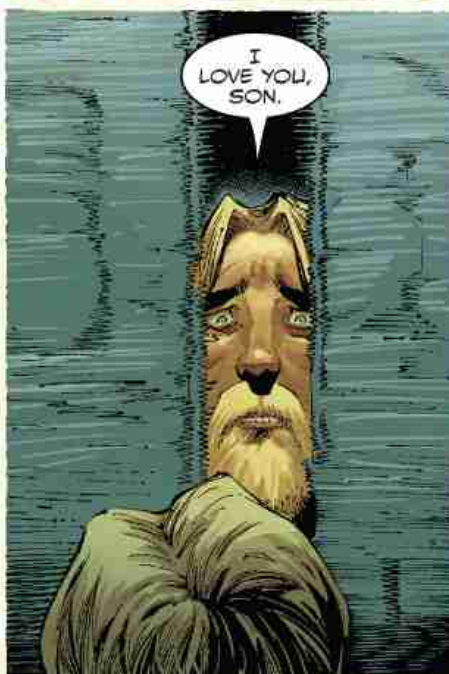
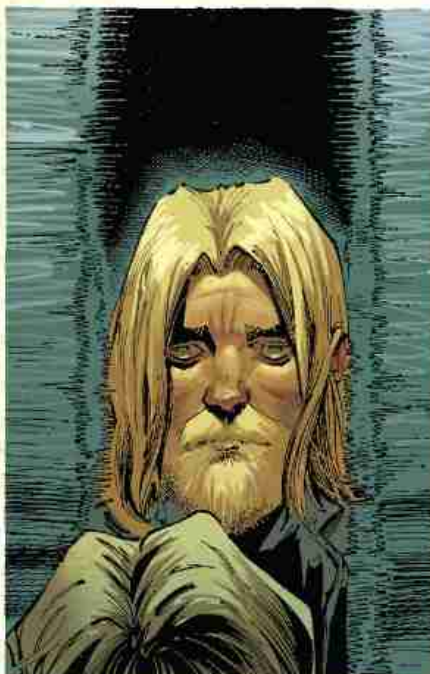
YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE TO HAVE THIS LIFE.

THIS IS MY FIGHT. THESE ARE MY MISTAKES.

YOU...

YOU DON'T DESERVE THE THINGS I'VE PASSED DOWN TO YOU.







PLAN B MEANS
THINGS HAVE
GONE TO @#!%.

IT MEANS KNULL AND HIS
ARMIES OF DRAGONS HAVE
BROKEN THE PERIMETER OF
EARTH AND MAKE LANDFALL.



FIRST WAVE IS GROUND. CAP HAS
ASSEMBLED AN EVACUATION TEAM OF
STREET-LEVEL HEROES WITH A FOCUS
ON ELECTRICITY-BASED POWERS.

WE DON'T HAVE MUCH
TO GO ON, BUT WE KNOW
KNULL'S ONLY WEAKNESSES
ARE LIGHTNING, COSMIC
POWER AND MAYBE MAGIC...

...BUT
WE'LL
SEE.

THAT BEING
SAID...WE'RE A
LITTLE SHORT-
STAFFED.

TONY! ANY
WORD FROM
THOR?

IT'S...IT'S
NOT LOOKING
GOOD DOWN
HERE.

THESE DRAGONS
ARE EXPLODING
INTO THE CITY! COVERING
EVERYTHING IN SYMBIOTES!
GIVE ME SOME
GOOD NEWS!

NOTHING YET,
BUT OUR OTHER BIG
GUN IS ENTERING ORBIT
NOW. SHOULDN'T
BE LONG.

WE NEED
BACKUP NOW,
TONY!

IRON MAN,
CAPTAIN...PLEASE
EXCLUDE THE INTRUSION
INTO YOUR
MINDS...



1
THIS IS
CHARLES XAVIER. IF
YOU REQUIRE BACKUP,
PLEASE...STAND BY.

SECOND WAVE: WASHINGTON SQUARE PARK.



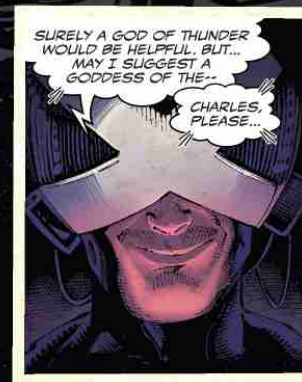
MY
X-MEN HAVE
ARRIVED.



SECOND
WAVE IS
AIR.

WE NEED TO SEVER THE
CONNECTION KNULL HAS
OVER HIS DRAGON HORDE
AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE.

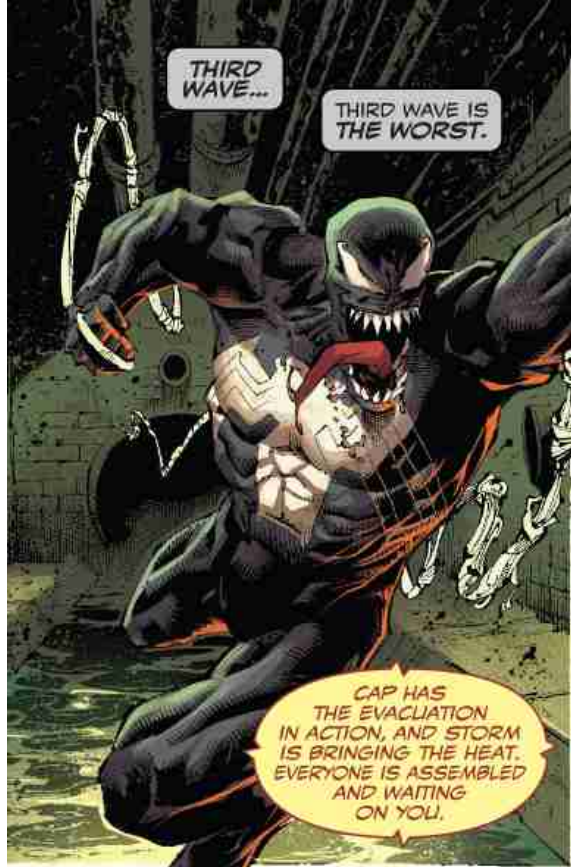
I UNDERSTAND
THOR'S ABSENCE
IS A SIGNIFICANT
HURDLE.



SURELY A GOD OF THUNDER
WOULD BE HELPFUL. BUT...
MAY I SUGGEST A
GODDESS OF THE--
CHARLES,
PLEASE...



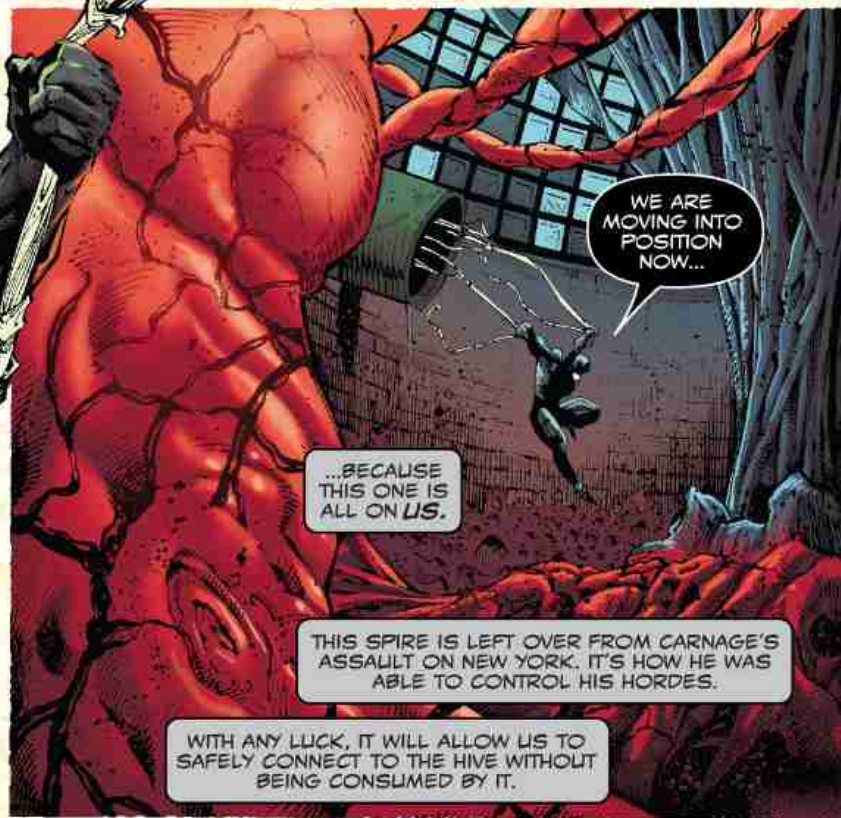
I'M TRYING TO
CONCENTRATE.



THIRD WAVE...

THIRD WAVE IS THE WORST.

CAP HAS THE EVACUATION IN ACTION, AND STORM IS BRINGING THE HEAT. EVERYONE IS ASSEMBLED AND WAITING ON YOU.



WE ARE MOVING INTO POSITION NOW...

...BECAUSE THIS ONE IS ALL ON US.

THIS SPIRE IS LEFT OVER FROM CARNAGE'S ASSAULT ON NEW YORK. IT'S HOW HE WAS ABLE TO CONTROL HIS HORDES.

WITH ANY LUCK, IT WILL ALLOW US TO SAFELY CONNECT TO THE HIVE WITHOUT BEING CONSUMED BY IT.



EMPHASIS ON THE WORD "LUCK."

STILL, WE HAVE TO TRY.

IF **STORM** OR THE OTHERS CAN BREAK THE DRAGONS OUT OF THE HIVE WITH LIGHTNING OR MAGIC, THEN MAYBE I'LL BE ABLE TO TAKE CONTROL OF THEM FROM HERE.

MAKE OUR OWN ARMY.



OR...

...KNULL FINDS US IMMEDIATELY AND CHOKES US TO DEATH WITH OUR OWN SYMBIOTE.

EITHER WAY...

...TIME'S UP.

@#% IT.



LET'S GO.



THIS IS DOCTOR STRANGE BROADCASTING ON ALL RADIO, MENTAL AND SPIRITUAL PLANES! IF YOU CAN HEAR MY VOICE, PLEASE COME IN!

THESE DRAGONS ARE UNLIKE ANY I HAVE FACED! THEY ARE BREAKING THROUGH MY BARRIERS AS FAST AS I CAN CAST THEM!



I CAN HEAR YOU! SEE YOU! STRANGE, HOLD ON! WE ARE ALMOST THROUGH TO THE CORE! I NEED MORE--



I CANNOT-- AGH!--HOLD THEM--BACK! PLEASE! CAN ANYONE--



DAMMIT, WE'RE LOSING STRANGE!

WE'RE LOSING, BROCK! WE NEED YOU TO GET IN RIGHT NOW!



NOW, EDDIE!

AGGGHH!!!
I'M IN!!! I CAN SEE IT!



I CAN SEE IT, TONY. IT'S...

OH GOD...



OH GOD, RUN! RUN!!!

IT'S NOT JUST THE DRAGONS! IT'S NOT JUST KNULL!!!



WHAT--WHAT AM I LOOKING AT... I CAN'T...



TONY! CAN YOU HEAR ME? IT'S EDDIE! YOU HAVE TO GET OUT OF THERE!

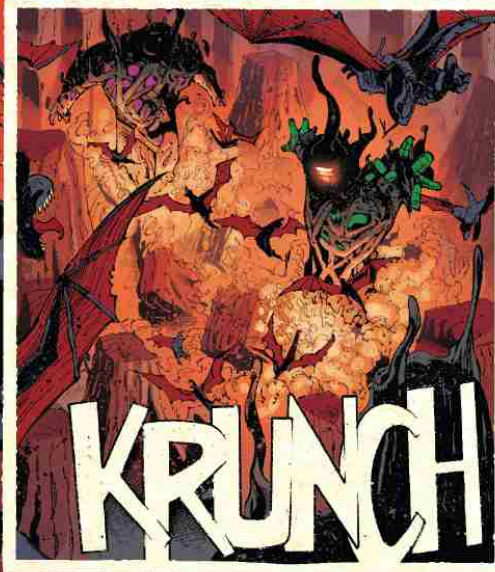


THIS IS HOW IT STARTED, BEFORE THE SYMBIOTES... BEFORE THE DRAGONS...

KNULL'S FIRST ENEMIES WERE THE CELESTIALS...



...AND IT LOOKS LIKE HE'S SETTLED THE SCORE!



KRUNCH



AH...



I SEE MY REPUTATION PRECEDES ME...
...SO I WON'T WASTE YOUR TIME...



I AM
GOING TO
KILL YOUR
WORLD.

IN THE
MEANTIME, I
AM LOOKING FOR
A HUMAN NAMED
BROCK.

SO BRING
HIM TO ME, AND
THIS CAN BE AS
PAINLESS AND AS
QUICK AS I AM
CAPABLE.

THAT
IS ALL.



OKAY, EVERYONE BACK! GET BACK!

ARE YOU CALLING A RETREAT?

TONY, THE GAME HAS CHANGED! WHERE THE HELL IS THE--

GETTING A LOCK ON HIM NOW! BE CAREFUL, KNULL'S RIGHT ON TOP OF--



WELL, LOOK AT THIS.

A WELCOMING PARTY FOR MY CORONATION.

HOW NICE...



AND WHO ARE YOU ALL SUPPOSED TO BE?

CAP! I HAVE A LOCK ON THE BIG GLIN! HE'S INBOUND NOW!!! TEN SECONDS!!!



NORMALLY, WE'RE THE LAST THING GUYS LIKE YOU EVER SEE.

BUT TODAY?

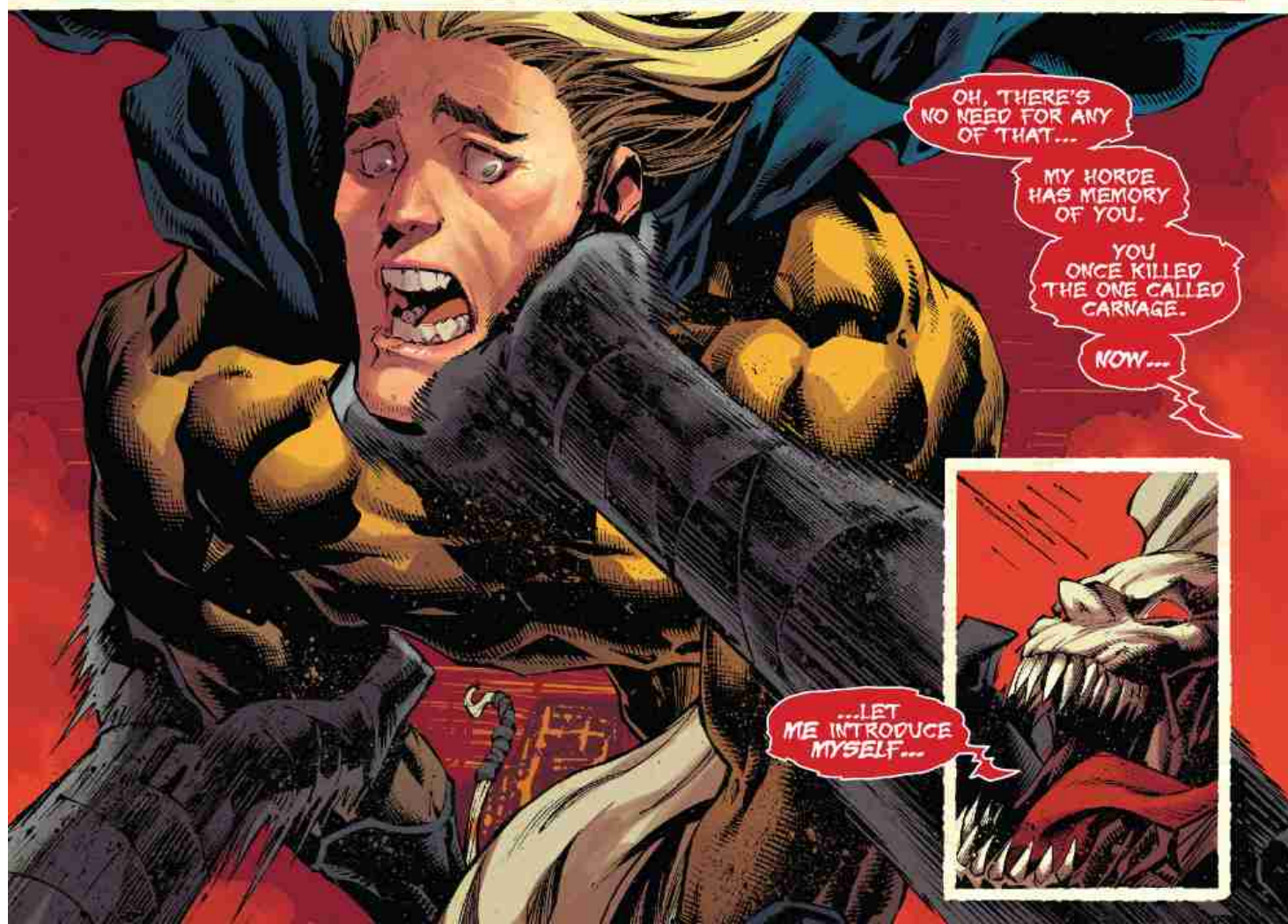


WE'RE JUST HERE TO WATCH.

HE'S HERE AND AWAITING YOUR ORDERS, CAP. PERMISSION TO ENGAGE?

PERMISSION GRANTED.







OH MY
GOD...HE'S GOING
TO--



NEGGHHH,
NO...THE VOID...
YOU'LL RELEASE
HIM AND--



I
AM THE
VOID.



CHILD...



I AM
KNULL.

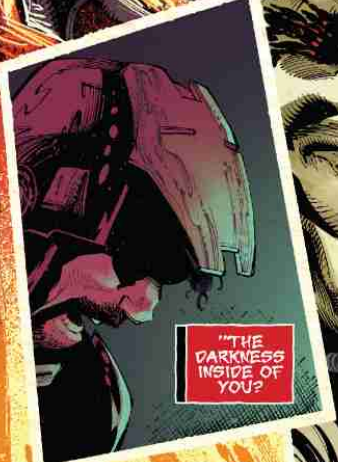


"LORD
OF THE
ABYSS."

SENTRY?!
BOB!!!



GOD OF THE
SYMBIOTES.



"THE
DARKNESS
INSIDE OF
YOU?"



THAT
DARKNESS
BOWS TO
ME.

CAP! GET OUT OF THERE NOW! CAP, DO YOU HEAR ME? WE HAVE TO REGROUP! WE CAN'T WIN THIS RIGHT NOW!

WE ARE OUT OF OPTIONS, CAP! RUN!!!



TONY...

...THERE'S ALWAYS ONE MORE THING YOU CAN DO.

SECURE THE CITY. GET AS MANY PEOPLE CLEAR AS YOU CAN.

WE'LL HOLD THE LINE.

AVENGERS?

ASSEMB--



WAS THAT IT, THEN? YOUR DEFIANT LAST STAND?



I MUST SAY... I'M NOT TERRIBLY IMPRESSED. I HAD HOPED THE MIGHTY EARTH WOULD HAVE PROVEN MORE... WORTHY OF A BATTLE...



ALAS... YOU WILL FALL LIKE THE REST.

I HAVE MET YOUR ARMIES, LITTLE ONES.

MEET MINE.

THE GROUND! IT'S--

GUYS! HOLD ON, I CAN--

NO! GET OUT OF HERE, SPIDER-MAN! GET HELP!

CAP, PLEASE COME IN! I'M LOSING YOU.



THERE-- THAT'S MUCH BETTER.

NOW... LET'S MAKE SURE WE AREN'T INTERRUPTED FURTHER...

CAP? YOUR CONNECTION IS CUTTING OUT!!! WHAT'S GOING ON?!



STEVE!



THIS
SKY OF
YOURS...
NO MORE
DISTRACTIONS...



NO
MORE OF YOUR
SUN...



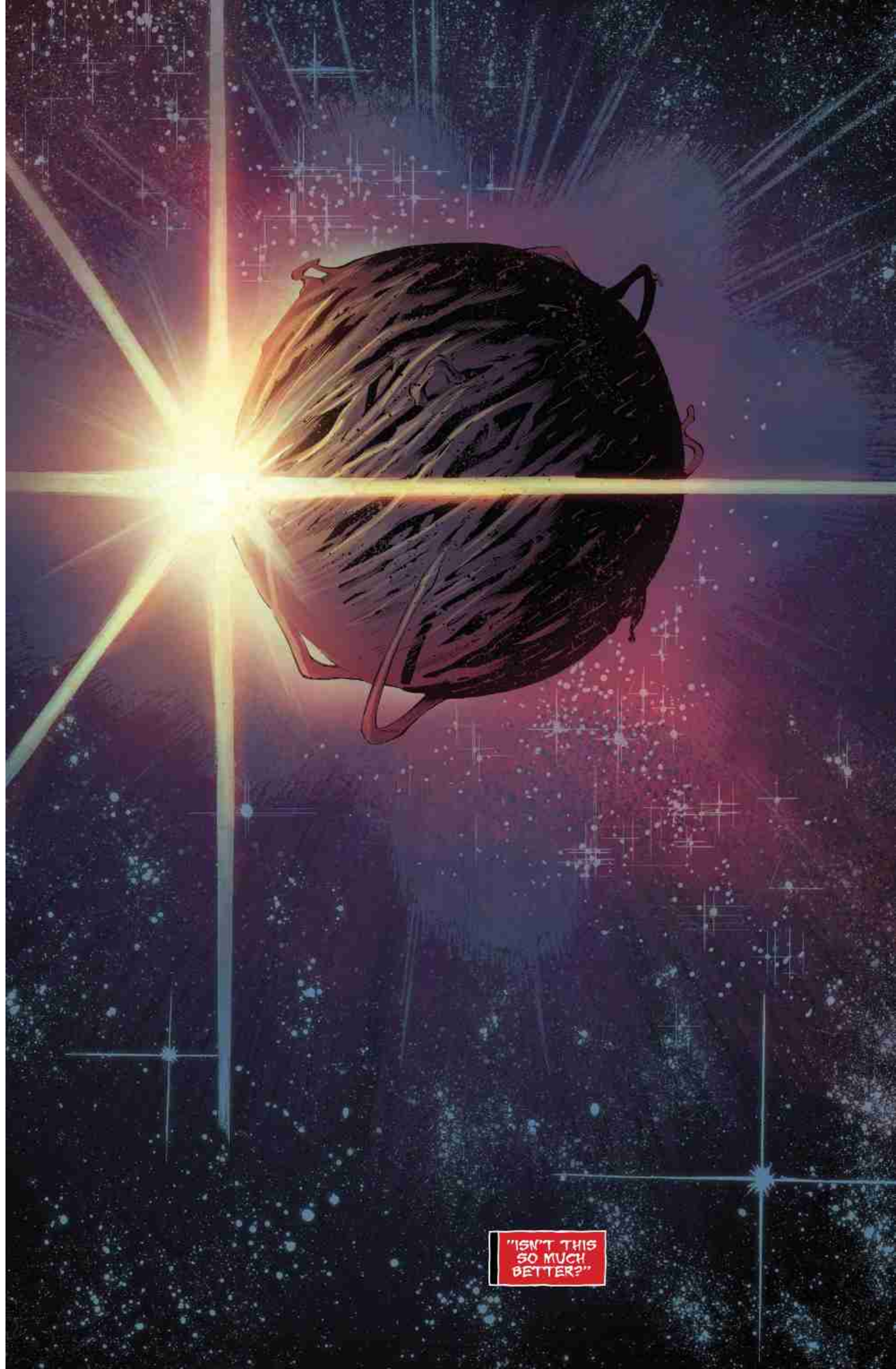
NO MORE
STARS.



NO MORE
LIGHT...



AH...
YOU
SEE?



"ISN'T THIS
SO MUCH
BETTER?"



UM,
CHARLES? TONY?
CAN SOMEONE EXPLAIN
TO ME WHAT JUST
HAPPENED?

KNOLL...DEAR
GOD! HE JUST
COVERED THE ENTIRE
EARTH IN A
SYMBIOTIC
DOME.

I'M GETTING
REPORTS FROM
WAKANDA, LATVERIA,
JAPAN...IT'S...
EVERYWHERE...



OKAY,
SO...I
NEED A PLAN
HERE. I CAN'T
KEEP THIS
UP!

HMMMM...



HELLO, LITTLE
LIGHT...





WE'RE
GOING TO GIVE
HIM WHAT HE
WANTS.



EDDIE, WE
AREN'T THERE YET.
DO NOT GIVE UP. AND
YOU HEARD HIM, HE'LL
KILL THE WORLD
EITHER WAY!



THEN
MAYBE WE'LL
JUST BUY YOU
GUYS SOME
TIME.



BUT
WE'RE DONE
HIDING.

EDDIE,
DON'T--

VENOM
OUT.



YOU
READY?

YES, EDDIE. I...I
CAN REACH OUT
DIRECTLY TO HIM.
IT WILL...

IT'S GOING
TO HURT. I
KNOW. BUT...

MUST BE
DONE, EDDIE.
YES...ONLY
WAY...

Toss

EDDIE...
WANTED TO
TELL YOU...



NO MATTER
WHAT
HAPPENS...

WANTED
TO MAKE
SURE...YOU
KNEW, THAT
WE...THAT
I--

YEAH...



I
KNOW.



LAST DANCE,
PARTNER.

YOU
READY?

YES,
EDDIE.

ALL RIGHT,
THEN...



LET'S
GO MEET OUR
MAKER.





SEE?

CATCH

ACH!

DO YOU
SEE HOW
BEAUTIFUL
THE DARK
IS?

WITH
STILL SO
MUCH LIGHT TO
KILL...BUT
ALREADY...



P-LEASE...
JUST TAKE ME.

IT DOESN'T
HAVE TO BE THIS
WAY, IT--



WAIT, I KNOW
YOU...

YOU'RE
THAT HOST
WHO BEAT
MY DRAGON...
I THOUGHT
I KILLED
YOU...

HUH. MINDS
ARE FUNNY
THAT WAY, I
SUPPOSE...

I DO
APOLOGIZE. THERE'S
BEEN A BIT OF
CONFUSION...



WHAT? WHAT ARE YOU
TALKING ABOUT?
YOU SAID--

MY FAULT,
REALLY...



I
SHOULD
HAVE SPECIFIED
WHICH
BROCK.

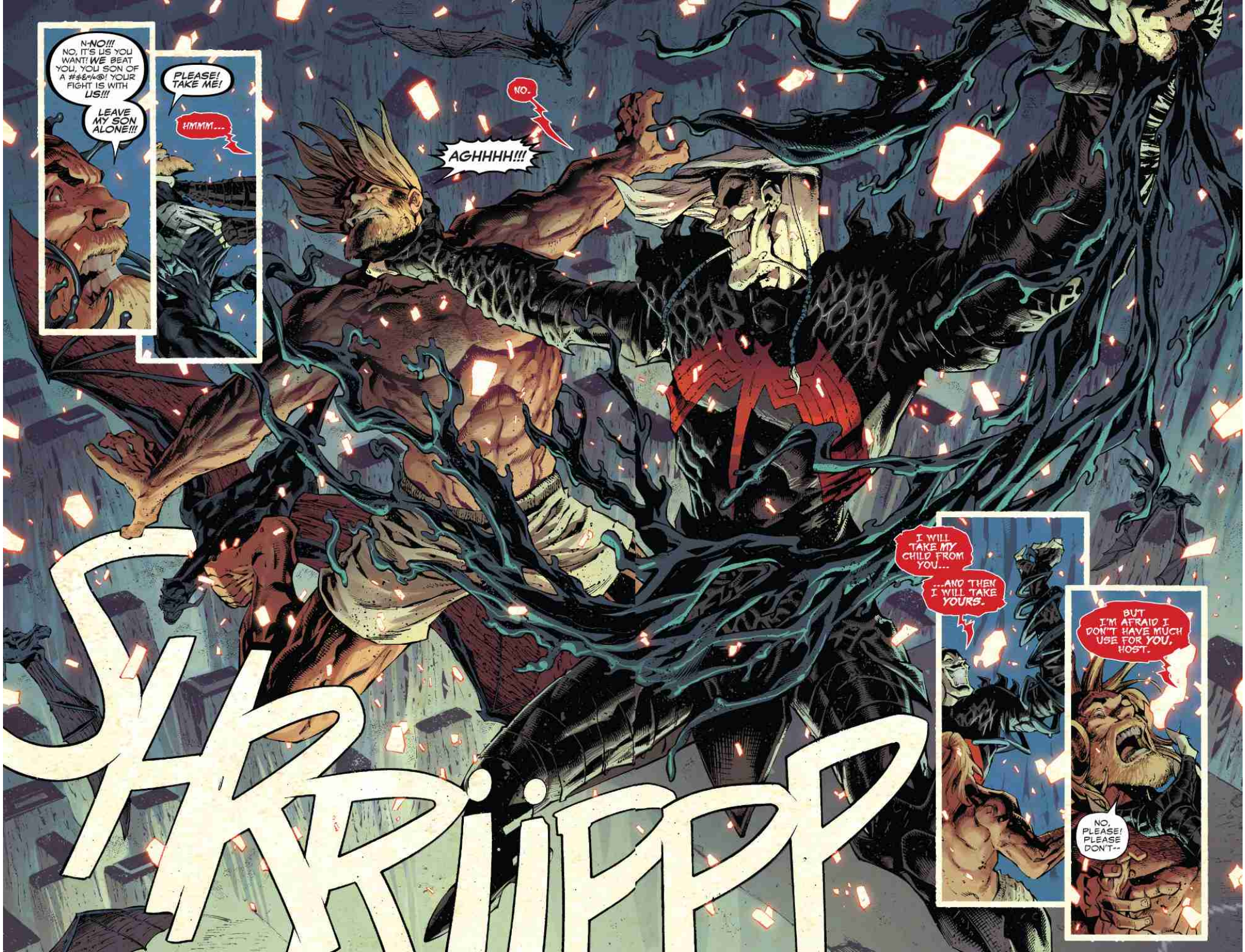
N-NO!!!
NO, IT'S US YOU
WANT! WE BEAT
YOU, YOU SON OF
A #%%&@! YOUR
FIGHT IS WITH
US!!!
LEAVE
MY SON
ALONE!!!

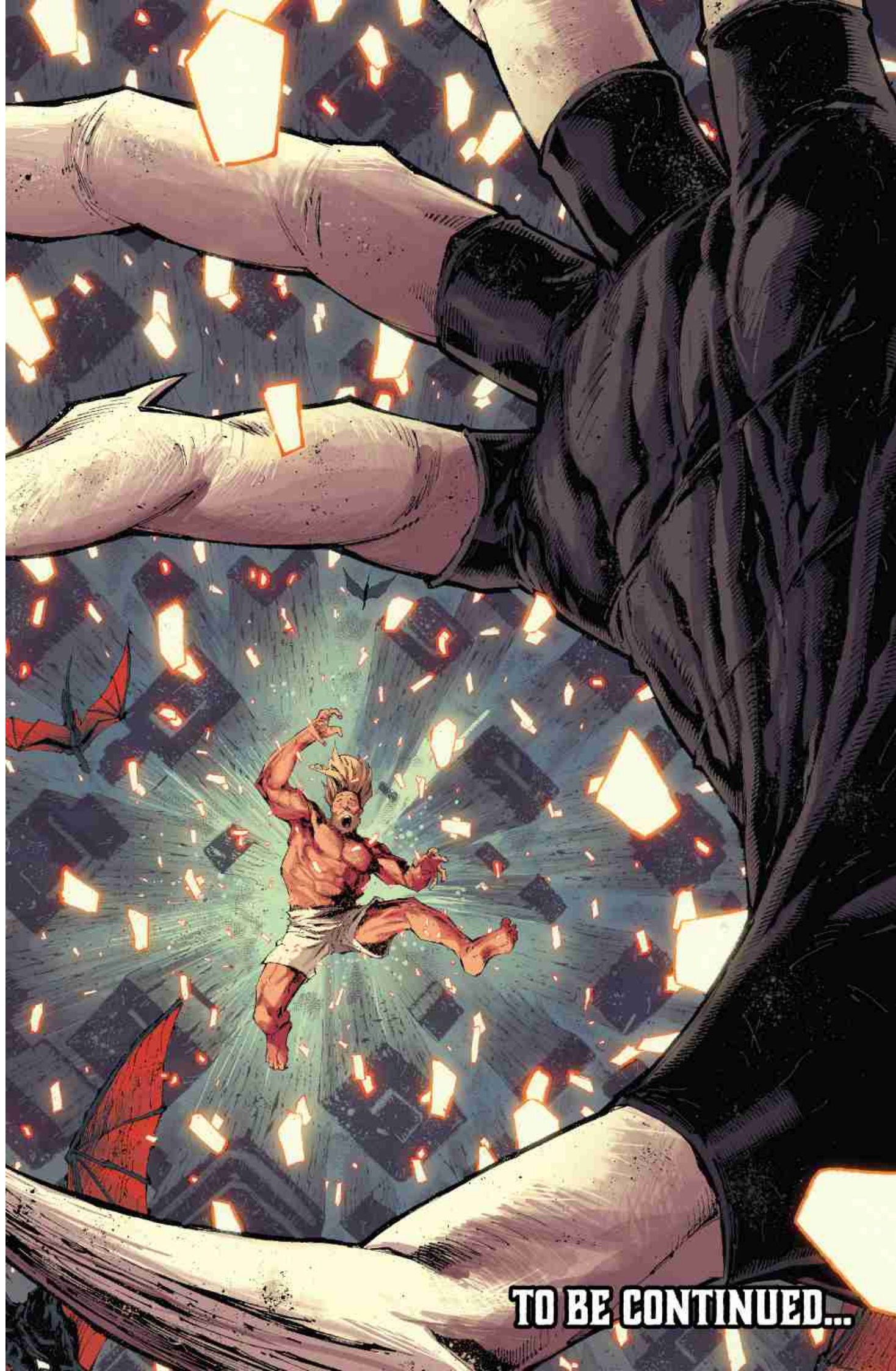
PLEASE!
TAKE ME!
EHHHHH!!!

NO.
AGHHHH!!!

I WILL
TAKE MY
CHILD FROM
YOU....
...AND THEN
I WILL TAKE
YOURS.

BUT
I'M AFRAID I
DON'T HAVE MUCH
USE FOR YOU,
HOST.
NO,
PLEASE!
PLEASE DON'T--





TO BE CONTINUED...

KING IN BLACK

CHAPTER ONE REIGN

DONNY CATES WRITER // **RYAN STEGMAN** PENCILER
JP MAYER INKER // **FRANK MARTIN** COLOR ARTIST
VC's CLAYTON COWLES LETTERER

RYAN STEGMAN, JP MAYER & FRANK MARTIN COVER ARTISTS

RYAN STEGMAN, JP MAYER & FRANK MARTIN [PREMIERE];
LEINIL FRANCIS YU & SUNNY GHO [INTERLOCKING];
PHILIP TAN & SEDASTIAN CHENG [LAUNCH];
IDAN COELLO & JESUS ABURTOV [DRAGON];
TAURIN CLARKE [SPOILER]; **IAN BEDERMAN** [TATTOO];
ALEX HORLEY [HIDDEN GEM]; **PEACH MOMOKO**;
SUPERLOG; **DONNY CATES** VARIANT COVER ARTISTS

PATRICK McGRATH LOGO DESIGN

ANTHONY GAMBINO PRODUCTION DESIGN

DANNY KHAZEM ASSISTANT EDITOR

DEVIN LEWIS EDITOR

NICK LOWE EXECUTIVE EDITOR

C.D. CEDULSKI EDITOR IN CHIEF

WITH LOVE TO STAN & STEVE AND DAVID & TODD

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LETTERS TO THE KING IN BLACK

LOOK OUT BELOW, EDDIE BROCK!

Hello, readers! AT LAST, the VENOM event we've all been waiting for has arrived: **KING IN BLACK!**

One of the most ambitious stories I've ever been part of, **KING IN BLACK** is a five-chapter epic spinning out of Donny Cates and Ryan Stegman's ongoing **VENOM** run. While you may just be joining us for this first chapter of 2020's symbiotic slugfest, I assure you that it's **WELL WORTH** dipping back into your local comic shop's back issue bins or trade paperbacks to get caught up. What Donny, Ryan and all the incredible collaborators who've joined us on this volume of **VENOM** have done is the single most expansive story in the character's history — and this issue is just the beginning.

Crazily enough, we're sending this issue to the printer on the three-year anniversary **TO THE DAY** of when Donny submitted his pitch for **VENOM** and we got this crazy show on the road. Even back then, we knew where we wanted to end up. Knull was in that very first document I got from Donny, and every arc from these past three years has put a new piece or player into the Marvel Universe. Now all of those disparate story threads are finally coming together in an awesome assembly of comic books from your pals at the House of Ideas.

And because we try to stay one step ahead, a couple of them are already **ON SALE**, and the rest are already on their way! Starting with...



SYMBIOTE SPIDER-MAN: KING IN BLACK #1 has been on sale for a couple of weeks now. Just like the last two volumes of the symbiotic stroll down memory lane, **SYMBIOTE SPIDER-MAN: KING IN BLACK** is a bombastic romp through the Marvel Universe of yesteryear from the powerhouse creative team of Peter David, Greg Land, Jay Leisten and Frank D'Armata. If you're a symbiotic superfan, you've probably snagged this one already, but on the off chance you haven't, **DO IT NOW!** Peter, Greg and the whole team are **GOING FOR BROKE** in this series! Every page packs an enormous punch, and, better still, the whole team is working to explore corners of the Marvel U we've never seen before — including a Silver Age expedition to **KNOWHERE!** Look for **#2 THIS MONTH!!!**



I'll shoot it to you straight, Marvelites — I've worked on a lot of comic books since I started at Marvel, and **KING IN BLACK: IRON MAN/DOCTOR DOOM #1** ranks as one of my **ALL-TIME** favorites. Mere **HOURS** after our planning summit for the entire **KING IN BLACK** epic, Christopher Cantwell reached out to me with an off-the-wall idea of the highest order. We brought Tom Brevoort into the conversation, and he dug Chris' thinking as well, and just like that, we were off to the races. Bringing in Salvador Larroca was a no-brainer, and the result is an issue that is a singularly terrific event tie-in while being as true to the Marvel spirit and style as any other. This one's got the **Mighty Marvel Manner** all over it, True Believers — and it's one you won't want to miss!



Look, it's **AL EWING** and **AARON KUDER** telling an emotionally gut-wrenching story about the Hulk against the backdrop of a symbiotic invasion of Earth. You already know how **UNBELIEVABLE** Al and Joe Bennett's **IMMORTAL HULK** is month after month. Trust me when I say that this one-shot is no different — **KING IN BLACK: IMMORTAL HULK** is a **HOME RUN** in every sense of the word!



Never one to be outdone by the surface dwellers, **KING IN BLACK: NAMOR** is set in Atlantis' past, written by industry

legend Kurt Busiek and illustrated by Benjamin Dewey and Jonas Scharf (and look at that cover by Leinil Francis Yu!!!). This miniseries sets the stage for events that unfold across the entire KING IN BLACK narrative. Kurt has such a mind for sorcery and mythology, and that skill is on full display in this story, as he, Ben and Jonas all breathe life into the suffocating depths of the underwater kingdom...



But it isn't all just new miniseries and one-shots, True Believers! One thing that was important to me, Donny, Ryan, Nick, C.B. — EVERYONE working on the entire event — was that KING IN BLACK affect as much of the Marvel Universe as it possibly could, and the only place that can truly, authentically happen is in the ongoing monthly books themselves.

Luckily, plenty of the creators already working on ongoing monthly Marvel series answered the call — and the way they've integrated their stories into the larger KING IN BLACK narrative is going to BLOW YOU AWAY!



SPIDER-WOMAN is a book that's always been near and dear to my heart, and this new volume by Karla Pacheco and Pere Pérez is no exception. They're a dynamite team who have brought Jessica Drew back to her superspylin', ass-kickin' roots, and the result is one of the most dynamic and adventurous comics on stands today. They grabbed KING IN BLACK by the horns and stand poised to tell one of the most definitive Spider-Woman stories in the character's fabled history.



BLACK CAT has a mean history with symbiotes. As longtime Spider-Readers know already, Felicia Hardy's first encounter

with Venom was a brutal exchange that nearly cost her her life and changed the course of her relationship with Spider-Man forever. All of which is to say that she's not about to be scared off by a bunch of symbiote dragons raining from the sky. From Jed MacKay and C.F. Villa, with **OUTSTANDING** covers by Pepe Larraz, **BLACK CAT** kicks off a new volume with a three-issue tie-in to KING IN BLACK, and by the end of them, the fate of the world may rest on her shoulders.

You know how they say never cross a black cat's path? Knull's never heard that saying before — and he's about to wish he had!



And last, but certainly by no means least, is **VENOM**, which will, of course, tie into KING IN BLACK. From Donny and longtime VENOM maestro Iban Coello, these tie-ins run right alongside the main KING IN BLACK narrative and are a brutal story in their own right. I just read the script for VENOM #32 last night, and, man, you guys are NOT PREPARED for the roller-coaster ride that we're all about to take — so buckle up.



All this is only the tip of the iceberg, Venomaniacs! We've got **MARVEL TALES**, we've got **OFFICIAL HANDBOOKS OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE**, we've got an entire damn **PLANET OF THE SYMBIOTES**! Even **DAREDEVIL** is getting in on the action! (Hey, speaking of DD — did you catch ol' Hornhead's appearance in this comics mag? Wonder what **THAT NEW LOOK** is all about. I bet **DAREDEVIL** #25 has the answer!)

ENOUGH PLUGGING! You wanna let us know how we're doing? Send us some fan mail to SPIDEYOFFICE@MARVEL.COM! Be sure to mark your note "okay to print," and it may just appear in this very column in a future issue!

In the meantime, **BE BACK HERE IN THREE WEEKS!** Because Eddie Brock's just been dropped from the top of the Empire State Building, and it's a
Long
Way
Down.

Stay safe!
Devin
10.31.2020

HEIRS TO THE THRONE

While his focus on Earth is a recent development, Knull has been readying himself for a war against the light and life for eons, and **the symbiotes**, while arguably Knull's most dangerous and perfect creation, were certainly not the first...



KNULL

The god and creator of the symbiotes, Knull is the ruler of THE ABYSS, the existential chasm between the destroyed previous universe and the prime reality that took its place. Swearing vengeance on every living thing birthed by **the Celestials**, Knull gave life to creations of his own...



THE NECROSWORD

Death itself made manifest, the **Necrosword**, or **All-Black**, was forged in the core of a dead Celestial. The first weapon Knull formed in his war against the light, it is capable of slaying Celestials and can be summoned from the living darkness of which the symbiotes are composed.



THE VOID KNIGHT

Born to combat the **Silver Surfer**, the **Void Knight** would perhaps rank as one of Knull's favorite creations, were the God-King of the Symbiotes capable of such sentiment. The Lord of the Abyss felt a kinship with this powerful and dangerous creation and almost felt regret when the Surfer erased it from existence.



THE SYMBIOTES

Before Knull encountered Thor, he realized that his dragons would not be numerous enough to extinguish life in the universe and return it to its blissful state before the existence of the Celestials. So he began to experiment, manipulating **darkness** into a living form. In time, Knull realized that rather than eradicating life, he could simply **corrupt** it.



DARK CARNAGE

Trapped, Knull reached into the psychic darkness of his symbiotic creations, hoping to psychically connect with any receptive host. He did this for lifetimes until he found one in **Cletus Kasady**. Long-dead, Kasady's corpse was obtained by an Earthbound cult that has worshipped Knull for generations. Bonded to the last remnants of an incinerated symbiote dragon, Kasady was resurrected as a new **Dark Carnage** and unleashed absolute chaos on an unsuspecting New York and world...

THE SYMBIOTE DRAGONS

Though their origins remain shrouded in mystery, the symbiote dragons were created to surge through space and destroy any life they encountered. Not shackled by vulnerabilities to sonics and fire (unless in the most **extreme** amounts), they even reached as far as the Milky Way galaxy and Earth's local solar system. Tormenting humankind, they served as inspiration for chapters of Earth's shared mythology and manifested Knull's wrathful will on an unsuspecting universe.



THE EXOLON

With each attempt at controlling the living Abyss, Knull grew closer to a perfected design. The place he sent the less-successful of his experiments became known as the Exoteric Latitude. An as-yet relatively unexplored region of space, the **Exoteric Latitude** is home to the **Exolon**, creatures that, true to their nature, found hosts in a group of unwitting Kree who happened to drift through their corner of the universe.



THE SYMBIOTE HIVE

As the symbiote species grew, Knull remained psychically connected to all of them. What was once a few dragons or symbiotes became a teeming hive mind with Knull at its center. Ultimately, that connection that proved to be his undoing, as his creations rebelled and entombed him at the heart of what would come to be known as the symbiote homeworld, **Klyntar**.



OTHER EXPERIMENTS

Evidence suggests that there are other organisms in the universe that Knull created, adrift among the stars. Whatever their origins, one thing is for certain — Knull has **some** psychic sway over them.



PRE-CREATION

Knull forges the Necrosword and begins the experiments that would eventually become the symbiote species and its offshoots. **(VENOM #1-6, SILVER SURFER: BLACK)**

~1000 BCE

Knull, encased in symbiote armor, battles a mysterious golden god on the homeworld of Gorr the God Butcher. **(THOR: GOD OF THUNDER #6)**

~700 CE--1970

Encased in ice at the bottom of the ocean, the Grendel lies dormant, lost to time.

~ONE YEAR AGO

After the dissolution of S.H.I.E.L.D., the frozen Grendel symbiote breaks out of containment and unleashes its fury on an unsuspecting New York City. Aided by the younger Spider-Man, Eddie Brock incinerates the monster, but **the Maker** acquires a small sample of its remains. **(VENOM #1-#6)**

~THREE MONTHS AGO

Dark Carnage launches an all-out assault on the remaining living symbiote hosts, including Venom. With no choice, the Venom symbiote absorbs the Grendel from Cletus Kasady and is once again subsumed into Knull's hive. With enough of the Codex restored to free himself, Knull disperses the symbiotes that form the planet Klyntar around him and reforms them into a horde of hundreds of thousands of dragons — and begins a death march across the universe... **(ABSOLUTE CARNAGE)**

~TWO WEEKS AGO

Eddie Brock warns the Avengers that the Codex is complete and Knull has begun a campaign across the galaxy. Before they can properly mount a counteroffensive and extract all possible intel from Brock, he is swept into the timestream after being ambushed by Mac Gargan.

(FREE COMIC BOOK DAY: SPIDER-MAN/VENOM 2020)



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11



VENOM

Years ago, disgraced reporter Eddie Brock stumbled upon an alien organism during one of the lowest points of his life. Severed from its own collected consciousness, the symbiote found a willing partner in Brock, and the two became **Venom**, a vigilante in their own right, who eliminated the criminal element with extreme prejudice.

2



4



6



8



10



~100,000 YEARS AGO

Knull dispatches the dragon symbiotes into the universe to eradicate all life. **(VENOM #4)**

~600 CE

The dragon symbiotes arrive on Earth and attack man in Scandinavia. Mistaking the creature for an Earthbound beast, humankind names it **Grendel**.

Thor comes to their aid and dispatches the dragon with a bolt of lightning. His attack causes a feedback loop within Knull's symbiote hive that incapacitates the god-king. The symbiotes rebel and entomb their creator. **(VENOM #1-#6)**

~1971

Led by Nick Fury, S.H.I.E.L.D. locates and excavates the Grendel, sampling its genetic material and exposing United States service members to it in small doses. **(WEB OF VENOM: VE'NAM)**

~TEN MONTHS AGO

The Maker's sample of the Grendel is stolen from his laboratory by a cult that has worshipped Knull for generations. Also in possession of the corpse of Cletus Kasady, the cult bonds the Grendel's remains to Cletus' and the result is the creation of a new, **Dark Carnage**. **(WEB OF VENOM: CARNAGE BORN)**

~ONE MONTH AGO

The interstellar warrior and Guardian of the Galaxy called **Wraith**, convinced that Knull is responsible for the parasitic Exolon that gave him his abilities, arrives at the planet Klyntar. Knull, now freed, acknowledges that the Exolon are one of his experiments and strips Wraith of them. Dying without the Exolon, Wraith teleports to Earth to warn Eddie Brock that Knull is free. **(WEB OF VENOM: WRAITH)**

CHECKLIST

☒ **KING IN BLACK #1**

THE BEGINNING OF THE END!

☐ **ATLANTIS ATTACKS #5**

THE AGENTS OF ATLAS THINK THEY'RE PREPARED FOR ANY THREAT, BUT NOTHING COULD PREPARE THEM FOR WHAT'S COMING!

☐ **THE UNION #1**

AS KNULL'S FORCES UNLEASH FURY AROUND THE WORLD, WILL ONE HERO IN THE UNITED KINGDOM PAY THE ULTIMATE PRICE?

☐ **VENOM #31**

1,454 FEET... A LONG WAY DOWN.

☐ **KING IN BLACK: IMMORTAL HULK #1**

KNULL'S ARRIVED DURING THE MOST WONDERFUL TIME OF THE YEAR. TOO BAD THE HULK ISN'T PREPARED FOR EITHER!

☐ **KING IN BLACK: NAMOR #1**

PAST AND PRESENT COLLIDE IN THE UNDERSEA KINGDOM OF ATLANTIS!

☐ **BLACK CAT #1**

THE CAT IN BLACK TAKES ON THE KING IN BLACK, STAGING THE MOST DARING HEIST OF HER CAREER!

☐ **SYMBIOTE SPIDER-MAN: KING IN BLACK #2**

SPIDER-MAN TRAVELS THE GALAXY WITH A TALKING RACCOON FOR THE VERY FIRST TIME!

☐ **KING IN BLACK #2**

☐ **SPIDER-WOMAN #7**

TRAPPED ON THE FAR SIDE OF THE MILKY WAY, JESSICA DREW FINDS HERSELF CAUGHT IN KNULL'S DESTRUCTIVE WAKE!

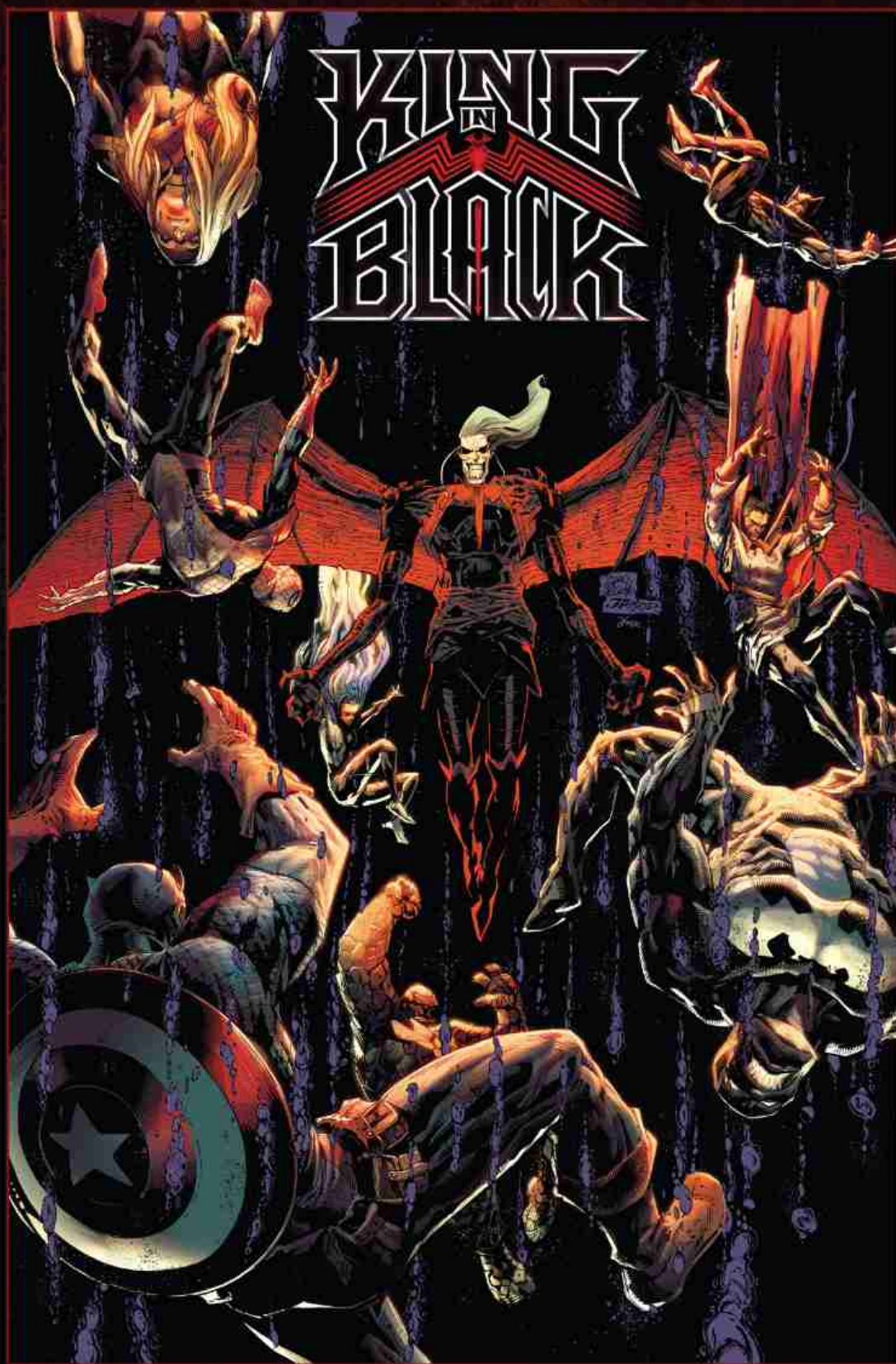
☐ **KING IN BLACK: IRON MAN/DOCTOR DOOM #1**

THE MEN CLAD IN METAL FACE OFF AGAINST A HOLLY JOLLY HORROR!

☐ **KING IN BLACK: NAMOR #2**

MORE SECRETS FROM NAMOR'S PAST STAND REVEALED AFTER THE REVELATIONS OF *KING IN BLACK #2*!

NEXT:



KING IN BLACK #2
ON SALE IN THREE WEEKS

